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Travel Montana

UPDATE

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Make Your Reservation Now to Get Online

Montana Innkeepers Association (MIKA) and Travel Montana have entered into an agreement to provide Montana lodging reservations via the Internet through WorldRes, Inc. WorldRes is one of the largest online reservation services in the world and will give visitors to the state's web site a chance to book reservations online.

"81% of inquiries for Montana travel information come from the web site."

This is how the program works: When accessing the visitmt.com site, users click on the lodging facility of their choice. If that facility is participating in the program a button will be activated indicating that reservations can be made electronically. By clicking on that button, a window will open with a direct line to worldres.com, allowing them to make their Montana reservations online.

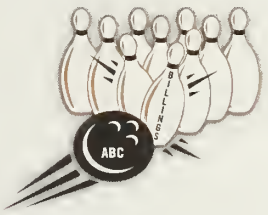
"This partnership is another example of the on-going expansion of services Travel Montana is providing via the Internet," says Travel Montana Director, Matthew Cohn. He explains that the use of the Internet for travel information has exploded over the past three years. Currently 81% of the inquiries for Montana travel information come electronically from the web site.

There are no up-front costs for lodging properties to participate in this project; the only thing needed is Internet access. All lodging facilities are invited to enroll. The program is expected to be fully implemented by January 2000. For more information or to get enrolled in the program, contact WorldRes representative, Sharon McAuliffe at (888) 973-7303.

Right up Billings' Alley

An estimated 50,000 bowlers participating in the 2002 American Bowling Congress (ABC) will call Billings "home" from January through June. Cheered on by 35,000 accompanying guests, the bowlers will go pin-to-pin for a projected $2 million in prizes. These convention visitors are expected to pump $50 million into the Billings economy.

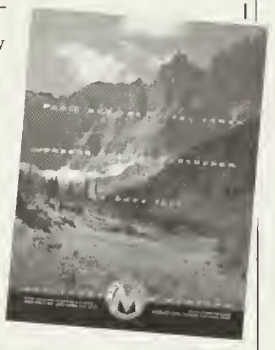
On December 15, Montana's Department of Commerce Director, Dr. Peter Blouke, will be present when the MetraPark Foundation officially accepts the first of four $30,000 checks going to Yellowstone County for support of the tournament. Revenue comes from state bed-tax dollars.



"We view this tournament as an opportunity to take a look at the economic impact in the Billings community and evaluate the ripple effect in the rest of Montana," Blouke said. "We have asked the University of Montana to study the impact of the convention. The tournament provides an excellent opportunity to measure the effectiveness of the state's participation in these sorts of efforts."

Warm Season Ad Campaign Heats Up

Travel Montana's 2000 "Warm Season" magazine campaign is ready to hit the newsstands. Sixty magazines will feature Montana advertisements with 15 new publications in the mix. Some of the ads will be specific to Lewis and Clark, history, golf, photography, camping and outdoor/ adventure.



According to Consumer Marketing Manager, Suzanne Elfstrom, one new magazine Travel Montana will target this year is *Bridal Guide*. "Statistics show that newlyweds spend an average of $3,200 on their honeymoons. The average expenditure for a family vacation in the summer of 1999 was $956. That's a significant amount of money," notes Elfstrom. This year's circulation will reach 51 million compared to 41 million in 1999.

News You Can Use

- Make plans now to attend the 2000 Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation, April 10-11 at Big Sky, Montana. Further details will follow in future "Updates."
- The 2000-2001 Meeting Planner's Guide is hot off the press. For your free copy call Marlee Iverson at 444-4107.

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Looking Good

If you haven't noticed, Travel Montana has a new logo. The "Big Sky Country" badge is being incorporated into all of the program's publications, advertisements, stationery and business cards. The logo was recently recognized by *PRINT Magazine* as one of the best new designs and illustrations produced in the country.

Lewis and Clark News

Almost 200 Montanans from 52 communities participated in the six regional Lewis & Clark Community Planning Workshops held around the state in October. At the workshops, participants developed lists of projects that could benefit their area's visitor appeal during and beyond the bicentennial.

Montana's Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission is gathering information about Lewis and Clark-related projects that may be eligible for federal funding or assistance from federal/state agency partnerships. A December deadline has been set for the initial formation of a Montana project list. For more information contact Clint Blackwood at 443-2109.

Montana Hospitality a Success Down South

Travel Montana's Pam Gosink and Marlee Iverson have returned from the National Tour Association's (NTA) convention in Nashville, Tennessee. The twosome met with 90 tour operators to explain the "treasures" of Montana. Marlee reports that Travel Montana and 27 Montana tourism service suppliers hosted 85 tour operators at a successful "Montana Night" dinner/education event. For anyone interested in the NTA sales leads contact Pam or Marlee at 444-2654.

Lights, Camera, Action Film News

Commercials

Ford Ranger - Bozeman and Livingston areas

La Batts Beer - Seeley Lake

Motorola - Choteau area

Still Shoot

Wrangler Jeans Europe - Ovando/Blackfoot Valley and Missoula

Esquire Magazine - Ovando/Blackfoot Valley and Missoula

Amica Catalog - Bozeman

Feature

Big Eden - Glacier Park and Flathead Valley

Tune In

Livingston, Montana outfitter Wilderness Pack Trips and Yellowstone Park will be spotlighted on the Travel Channel program "Only in America," Sunday, December 5 at 9 p.m. and Wednesday, December 8 at 10 p.m. The program will also air on Canada's Outdoor Life Network and Europe's Voyage.

The West Yellowstone area and Ken Sinay of Northern Rockies Natural History will be the focus of the ESPN program "Canon Photo Safari," Saturday, December 18 at 7:30 a.m. The program is produced by Barrett Productions in Missoula.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

December

4-8	American Bus Association Marketplace
7	MTRI Working Group Meeting - Helena

January

1	Happy New Year from Travel Montana
14-16	RMI Winter Roundup-Jackson Hole, Wyoming
16-20	Post RMI Winter FAM - Jackson Hole, Wyoming

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